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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 002095

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DEPT FOR A/S FRAZER, NSC FOR COURVILLE AND SHORTLEY

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SUBJECT: SUDAN SEEKS DELAY IN UNSC VOTE

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES CAMERON HUME: REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: On August 31 Foreign Minister Lam Akol summoned CDA Hume to ask for a delay in the Security Council vote until September 8. Hume pointed out that only a decision to reverse Sudan's plans for military action and work out consent to a UN operation could justify such delay. Akol said he wanted to travel to Washington in the next week to convey President Bashir's response to President Bush, which would also concern issues in the bilateral relationship. Hume stressed that the Government of Sudan should pledge not to launch any military offensive if it wanted a delay; Akol would not do this. Meanwhile, senior government spokesmen have sharply criticized the UNSC draft resolution. End summary.

¶2. (C) CDA Hume met August 31 with Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol at the request of Dr. Akol. Hume asked the Foreign Minister simply "Where do we go from here? We have a problem." Noting Sudan's request to delay a UN Security Council vote, Hume explained that it looked simple to the USG. The Sudanese government's security plan for Darfur, its military buildup, and military actions to date, all constituted violations of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). The Government of Sudan now asks for a delay in the Security Council until September 8. For what purpose? So that the Sudanese can go ahead with their planned military offensive in Darfur? He would need a good reason in order to ask his government for a delay in this environment. While he respected the sovereign right of the Government of Sudan, the international community was also obligated to proceed with the resolution at the UN Security Council. Ghana has agreed to be a co-sponsor of the resolution.

¶3. (C) Foreign Minister Akol replied that ongoing military operations are the response of Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) to attacks by the National Redemption Front (NRF). The NRF are not in the DPA, indeed, are determined to scuttle the DPA and overthrow the government. In June the NRF attacked Hamrat al-Sheikh, North Kordofan state, and has threatened the Dongola Dam. The NRF has attacked AMIS forces, the Sudanese Liberation Movement forces of Minni Minawi (SLM/MM) and SAF. How can the army not respond to these provocations? How can you question the right of this government to self defense? Hume reminded Akol that the United States condemned the attack on Hamrat al-Sheikh, while Sudan's Arab and African brothers remained silent.

¶4. (C) Hume asked the reason for the Foreign Minister's request to see him. Akol said he would go to Washington to discuss the issues discussed in the meeting with President Bashir (septel), specifically bilateral relations and Darfur. There was room for the two sides to strike a deal. Akol understood that the UN Security Council would likely vote

today, August 31. Yet there is to be a meeting on September 18. Akol asked what purpose a meeting one week after the resolution's passage would serve. The Government of Sudan wants the vote in the Security Council postponed until September 8 so that he can go to Washington for meetings to discuss the issues put on the table by A/S Frazer. Hume said he would report this request to Washington.

15. (C) Akol said this request to postpone the vote was not related in any way to the ongoing military build-up in Darfur. No one could convince the SAF to hold off its operations versus the NRF. The Government of Sudan had no cease-fire agreement with the NRF. The NRF opposed both the DPA and the Government. Hume replied that without an affirmation from the Government of Sudan that there would be no military offensive in the interim, there was no reason to postpone the vote. Akol repeated that his request for a delay is not related to his government's military plans. Hume objected and said that SAF actions would worsen an already dire humanitarian situation in Darfur. Large-scale displacements of people would get the attention of his government. The issue remained; would Sudan choose to address its problems together, in concert with the international community, or alone?

16. (C) CDA Hume cited his conversation with President Bashir, where Bashir said that AMIS was incapable and that the UN could not possibly get here fast enough. Yes, Sudan had the right to self defense, but Sudan would have to live with the consequences of resorting to force. If the Sudanese would delay their use of force and work with the UN, a way forward could be found. A UN Security Council vote authorizing a transition from AU to UN command in Darfur would pass, co-sponsored by at least seven nations, including Ghana. Akol interrupted, citing the practical requirement for

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Sudanese consent in any UN re-hatting. Hume acknowledged this, but pointed out the difference between a situation in which Sudan and its international partners worked together, vice one where Sudan isolated itself. Akol protested and said that although President Bashir had made a decision, it was still possible to strike a deal, but only discreetly, not in a public manner.

17. (C) In reply, Hume asked for confirmation of the message from the Government of Sudan. Sudan first sought a postponement of the UNSC vote until at least September 8. In the meantime, FM Lam Akol would travel to Washington to deliver President Bashir's response to the letter from President Bush. By implication, this response would indicate a willingness to discuss the conditions under which Sudan would consent to a UN peace-keeping operation in Darfur. Sudan would, throughout, retain its right to self defense. In any case, Hume recommended Sudan exercise maximum restraint. President Bashir's response would address issues in the bilateral relationship, specifically a proposed meeting between the two heads of state, an upgrade in relations to the level of Ambassador, a change in sanctions, and Sudan's inclusion in the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism. Hume said he would report to Washington and reply to the Foreign Minister later in the day on the prospects for a delay in the Security Council vote.

18. (C) Comment: FM Lam Akol had urged President Bashir to receive A/S Frazer and no doubt would like to make an accommodation with the USG to arrange Sudanese consent to UN peace-keeping in Darfur. However: 1) he could offer no assurance that the Sudanese Armed Forces would avoid any offensive in the coming days; 2) meanwhile, regime heavyweights such as Nafie Al Nafie, are denouncing the UN and threatening that the masses will rise up against the U.S. and UK. Embassy Khartoum suggests the response to Akol's request should be that any delay could only be justified by commitments not to use force and to use the intervening time to arrange Sudan's consent. Otherwise, delay would serve no

useful purpose. End comment.
HUME